

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. A. H. Belmont

DATE: January 8, 1964

FROM : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

SUBJECT: SAMUEL RILEY PIERCE, JR.
280 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK 17, NEW YORK
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Mohr
1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. J.A. Sizoo
1 - Mr. D.E. Moore
1 - Mr. D.J. Brennan
1 - Mr. R.W. Smith

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
DeLoach
Evans
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

C.R.U.S.A. - Negro Question

We know that Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, a self-avowed Marxist, represents a very real security problem to this country. In addition to his Marxism, Dr. King, as we know, for some time now has been surreptitiously receiving guidance from concealed members of the Communist Party of the United States. Apart from the security factor, he is a disgrace to the Negro people of this country because of his personal misconduct while at the same time purporting to be a minister of the gospel. Obviously he has the capacity to deceive people very successfully. This was made evident most recently by his being selected by "Time" magazine as the Man of the Year.

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Further, we know that he has been able to cleverly deceive both very important Protestant and Catholic organizations, securing thereby support from them which gives him added stature. It should be very clear to all of us that Martin Luther King must, at some propitious point in the future, be revealed to the people of this country and to his Negro followers as being what he actually is--a fraud, demagogue and moral scoundrel. When the true facts concerning his activities are presented, such should be enough, if handled properly, to take him off his pedestal and to reduce him completely in influence so that he will no longer be a security problem and no longer will be deceiving and misleading the Negro people.

NOT RECORDED

When this is done, and it can be and will be done, obviously much confusion will reign, particularly among the Negro people. There will be embarrassment, frustration, confusion, resentment, et cetera. Because of this and the emotional reaction that will set in, it is not unlikely that movements like the Nation of Islam could benefit greatly. Further, other ridiculous developments similar to the Old Father Divine and Daddy Grace organizations may appear. The Negroes will be left without a national leader of sufficiently compelling personality to steer them in the proper direction. This is what could happen, but need not happen if the right kind of a national Negro leader could at this time be gradually developed so as to overshadow Dr. King and be in the position to assume the role of the leadership of the Negro people. Dr. King has been completely discredited.

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Enclosure

JAN 24 1964

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Memorandum for Mr. Belmont
RE: SAMUEL RILEY PIERCE, JR.

For some months I have been thinking about this matter. One day I had an opportunity to explore this from a philosophical and sociological standpoint with Dr. Frank R. Barnett, whom I have known for some years. As I previously reported, Barnett is a very able fellow, a former Oxford scholar and professor, and one on whom I can rely. I asked Barnett to give the matter some attention and if he knew any Negro of outstanding intelligence and ability let me know and we would have a discussion. Barnett has submitted to me the name of the above-captioned person, Samuel Riley Pierce, Jr.

Enclosed with this memorandum is an outline of Pierce's biography which is truly remarkable for a man so young, having been born September 8, 1922. On scanning this biography, it will be seen that Pierce does have all the qualifications of the kind of a Negro I have in mind to advance to positions of national leadership. I won't go into all his accomplishments and qualifications in this memorandum, for it will only take a minute or two to scan the enclosed biography.

On first blush I know it can be said it is not the concern of the Bureau what happens to the Negroes when Martin Luther King has been discredited. This can be said, but I think it is a very short-sighted view. It is our concern if large numbers of them go into the Nation of Islam and other extremist groups with which we are concerned as an investigative agency. It is our concern if the Communist Party would be able to capitalize upon this confusion. Further, from a positive and constructive standpoint it would be of great advantage to have leading the Negro people a truly brilliant, honorable and loyal Negro who would steer the 20 million Negroes away from communism. I think in a very sound sense this necessarily must be of great interest to us. It would be most helpful to have a man like Pierce leading the Negroes to whom we could go, if necessary, and rely upon in sensitive matters over which this Bureau has jurisdiction.

I want to make it clear at once that I don't propose that the FBI in any way become involved openly as the sponsor of a Negro leader to overshadow Martin Luther King. As far as I am concerned, this is not an issue at all. But I do propose that I be given permission to explore further this entire matter with Frank Barnett and any other person known to both Barnett and myself who could be helpful. If this thing can be set up properly without the Bureau in any way becoming directly involved, I think it would be not only a great help to the FBI but would be a fine thing for the country at large. While I am not specifying at this moment, there are various ways in which the FBI could give this entire matter

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the proper direction and development. There are highly placed contacts of the FBI who might be very helpful to further such a step. These can be discussed in detail later when I have probed more fully into the possibilities.

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) For the information of the Director.

(2) That approval be given for me to explore this whole matter in greater detail, as set forth above.

C.K.

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WCS

See biography outline enclosed
WCS

ADDENDUM (1/9/64), WCS/csh:

Mr. Pierce has been investigated by the Bureau as a Departmental Applicant (for the position of Assistant US Attorney, Southern District of NY), and no derogatory information of any kind was developed. The investigation showed, as does the biography, that he has a remarkably fine record.

W.C.Sullivan

I am glad to see that "light" has finally though delayedly come to the Committee and Mr. [unclear] for [unclear] to get over the [unclear] that the Communists were taking over the [unclear] government but [unclear] [unclear] here couldn't or wouldn't see it.